578 shame of obscenities. They say: ɓlekɾ nsɔ̃nvi ɛ̃â bitɔ̃li ɾi 'kɔ̃moto.
684 Bɔ̃moto ndɛ̃ ndota (itɑ̃fɑ̃) "A woman is a ndota snake. Just as that
834 reptile twists through the grass and rolls up as soon as it sees a man approaching, so a woman finds it difficult to endure any obscenity."

The ideal way to be sure whether an expression is actually considered indecent is to check whether it may be used in the presence of a close relative, for a Nkundɔ̃ never utters an obscenity in front of such a person.

195 Among the Nkundɔ̃, as in Europe, certain indelicate exclama-
578 tions are so deeply rooted that they seem to have lost their original
834 meaning, that is, most of the population no longer thinks of it at all. That a few more serious and modest individuals are still aware of it is apparent from the way they change the pronounciation of the terms in question.

Licentious expressions are never considered indecent and shock no one when they are uttered in a group or during group activities.
●[571] Such activities include communal fishing and hunting expeditions, [61] drinking parties, dances, funerals, and -- at the present time -- communal work on a road, a resthouse, etc.

Thus we see that in these matters there is a remarkable discretion side by side with a certain degree of tolerance, which may be carried quite far. Licentious remarks are not condemned in themselves, but only because of fortuitous circumstances, so we see that the Nkundɔ̃ do not consider them from a moral point of view, as we do, but from a social one. But the fact that those are precisely the words which can become indecent and socially bad shows that the native sees in their content something shocking, shameful, some quality likely to give offense. The freedom exercised in certain cases does not alter this general conclusion but simply gives evidence of he inclinations of a passionate nature.

3. Dances

535

Nkundɔ̃ dances change periodically, as is the fashion in Europe. Old dances are given up after a time and are replaced by others which are newly invented or recently introduced. The dances fashionable at the present time came from the Besongɔ̃, who are by

P
178 doctor who was in charge of the dispensary at Flandria at that time
588 informed me of the case of a Botswa fruit harvester in the service of
563 the H.C.B. who had syphilis of unquestionably sexual origin.
164

M Though a racial difference constitutes an obstacle to marriage,
582 a tribal or ethnic one does not. Where the geographic situation permits, true Nkundó, such as the Elíngá, marry members of neighboring groups such as the Ngombe, the Mbole, or the Ekonda.

Article II. Social Status

M Among the Nkundó a difference in social status is not an
554 obstacle to marriage. They have no social classes strictly speaking.
582 They differentiate between those with authority, those who are in-
[565] feriors, and the individuals or families who are not entitled to their
[571] word in political matters; but these ideas do not come into play in ordinary social relations, [245] and especially not with respect to marriage. A person may belong to a clan which is inferior, subject, dependent, foreign, or descended from a slave; nevertheless he may marry even a member of the group's senior clan. These distinctions are in the realm of politics; a marriage is a matter of law, affection, and good relations based on the payment of a bride price.

M Actual slaves are an exception, but here a distinction must
567 be made between the sexes. Unions with slave women were very
582 common, but they were not marriages strictly speaking. Before a real marriage was entered into, the woman was set free. More details on this subject will be given in Chapter VII, Article V. For men the situation is altogether different. The condition of a slave was not only inferior, it was dishonorable, though a bit less so than among the Ancients. It might be overlooked if the love between the pair was unusually ardent, and there are a few clans descended from a "free" woman and a slave man, who were united in a proper and legitimate marriage for which the master paid the bride price.

There is no longer any opposition to the union of a "free" person with the descendant of a mixed marriage. The children may always claim kinship with their maternal ancestors who in these

326 Whereas with us the village inn is the place where the affairs of
521 the week are noisily debated, it is at the smithy where the Mongo
571 Negroes congregate. There the elders gather -- the younger men have no voice here; there the various differences about (or among) wives and the impending taxes are discussed; amidst the billows of smoke -- drawn with deep puffs out of their huge bamboo pipes -- the smith is the only one who works on and earns his living nobly.

326 The smith is the most judicious craftsman among the Mongo
428 Negroes.

His trade is practically the only one which is a family affair and is passed on from father to son. If a smith does not have any children, the business is taken over by his younger brother.

This right of inheritance is by no means general in the other trades; the trade of the smith is inherited while the others are taken up by any Tom, Dick, or Harry who happens to have a liking for them.

325 The smithy where the smith plies his trade is a wide oblong dark
348 hut (about five meters by ten meters) built alongside the public highway. In contrast with the other dwellings of the Negroes, the floors of which are generally built about 20 centimeters above the road, the floor of the smithy is dug out from 30 to 70 centimeters below the level of the road so that one goes down a step from the road into the smithy.

The reason why the floor of the smithy should be dug out in this way is not quite clear to me, but most probably it is to prevent the danger of fire when the storm winds that accompany the heavy tropical rains sweep through the huts. By digging out the floor in this way, an earthen enclosure about half a meter high is formed around the smithy, and this protects the smith from the wind and enables him to continue quietly at work.

325 In spite of the primitiveness of his tools [95] and the primitive manipulation of them, the smith knows how to get what he needs from his implements. The forge (lotulu) is constructed as follows: a block of wood is cut about 60 centimeters long, 40 centimeters wide, and 30 centimeters high, with a hollow pipe, half a meter long, connected to it. This is all formed of one piece. With the aid of a banana stalk, on which the clay is moulded, a smith's pipe is formed. The banana stalk is removed from the clay, and the hollow pipe (boongo) remains. Two, sometimes four, bellows (njasa) are placed on the

601 Bonsonga and etúká are terms used for kinship groups of
621 ranks B, C, and D, but occasionally they may also refer to
614 [192] the groups listed under A and, in addition, to the local groups which in size approximately correspond to the kinship units mentioned above. Etúká is the term used for the oil palm grove and for a certain kind of termite hill; apparently it is used for local groups more frequently than the term bonsonga.

[571] Another term whose meaning varies is ekíndá. This word
[535] designates, first of all, a dance group, a corps de ballet, and also the social unit which sends such a joint dance troupe to dance festivals.

Esé also has strong local connotations. It is usually identical with what we call a village, but frequently units which are larger or smaller than a village are designated as esé. Very large groups, tribes and even larger units, are called bonanga.

614 As a criterion for placing the individual groups within a certain rank, one or several functions have been chosen in each case. The groups of the individual ranks are described below relative to their functions. On the subject of groups it should be added that in general they do not differ from each other in certain traits. All groups of all ranks are kinship units of patrilineal descent. They consider themselves descendants of one ancestor. No continuous and complete genealogy which can be traced back to the original ancestor is known. The genealogy of the entire group of the Bakonda is shown in Diagram 1.

In Isangi two of the ancestors of the groups of rank D are brothers, the third is the brother of their father. A D-group (Ngelé) includes, in addition, the descendants of an illegitimate child of the paternal sister of the ancestor. These offspring form the C-group, Nsambásálá.

There is a gap between this ancient genealogy and the known ancestors from the recent past. In contrast with that of the neighboring Bokóté [Bokete] (see, for example, Boelaert, "Les Bongili"), the genealogical memory of the Ekonda is weak. [173] It does not reach back to the ancestor of the group of rank A. In this connection we must take into account the fact that a group